

Two Golden Corral Franchisees Receive North Carolina Honors

Billy Sewell And David Gronewoller Recognized By North Carolina Restaurant And Lodging Association (NCRLA)

June 9, 2008 - [PRLog](#) -- RALEIGH, N.C. – Two prestigious North Carolina restaurant industry awards were given to franchisees of Raleigh-based Golden Corral Buffet and Grill chain. Billy Sewell was named North Carolina Restaurateur of the Year by the North Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association (NCRLA), and David Gronewoller was named Chairman of the Board of the NCRLA.

Sewell began his company, Platinum Corral, in 1996 with the purchase of two Golden Corral restaurants.

He now owns 22 restaurants in North Carolina, South Carolina, West Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio, employing more than 1,500, with combined annual sales topping \$70 million. Gronewoller owns 12 Golden Corral restaurants in North Carolina, South Carolina and Florida and spent 13 years with Golden Corral as a corporate employee, including as district manager, and then 16 years as a franchisee. He plans to build 12 to 14 more Golden Corral restaurants.

NCRLA gives its Restaurateur of the Year award to an operator considered highly successful by other restaurateurs. Also considered are the level of involvement and participation in industry programs and contributions made to enhance the food-service industry. NCRLA represents more than 16,000 member businesses in the \$17.5-billion-sales-per-year industry, employing 10 percent of North Carolina's workforce.

Golden Corral, now in its 35th year, has expanded in the past decade, led by its growth of franchised restaurants. There are 482 restaurants in 40 states, with 376 franchised and 106 company owned. Systemwide sales in 2007 were \$1.53 billion.

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News Facts:

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- Billy Sewell was named North Carolina Restaurateur of the Year by the North Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association (NCRLA), and David Gronewoller was named Chairman of the Board of the NCRLA.
- Sewell began his company, Platinum Corral, in 1996 with the purchase of two Golden Corral restaurants. He now owns 22 restaurants in North Carolina, South Carolina, West Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio, employing more than 1,500, with combined annual sales topping \$70 million.
- Gronewoller owns 12 Golden Corral restaurants in North Carolina, South Carolina and Florida and spent 13 years as a corporate employee with Golden Corral, including as district manager, and then 16 years as a franchisee.
- Gronewoller plans to build 12 to 14 more Golden Corral restaurants.

Quotes:

“My career with Golden Corral has given me the opportunity to help many others besides our employees

and our guests. For example, last year at our Platinum Corral restaurants we raised \$80,000 for the Children's Miracle Network to benefit local children's hospitals," said Sewell. "We also raised \$40,000 and fed for free more than 18,000 active duty and retired military during Golden Corral's nationwide Military Appreciation Night. And we gave 75,000 free meals to elementary school children for awards and achievements."

"Billy is following in the footsteps of Golden Corral founder James Maynard and president and CEO Ted Fowler, who are among the NCRLA's 33 past Restaurateurs of the Year, said Gronewoller. "I am fortunate enough to count myself in that number as well."

"Restaurant industry recognition like this confirms the hospitality, customer-service focus and professionalism of our franchisees," said Larry Tate senior vice president of franchise sales for Golden Corral. "They are highly regarded by their peers as leaders of our industry."

About Platinum Corral:

Established in 1996 by owner Billy Sewell, Platinum Corral, based in Jacksonville, owns and manages 22 Golden Corral franchises throughout North and South Carolina, West Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio, with locations including Asheboro, Concord, Hickory, Wilmington, Burlington, Jacksonville, Reidsville, Eden, Lexington, Wake Forest and three locations in the Triangle. The company has been recognized as one of the Triangle's top 50 privately held companies and institutions in the Triangle Business Journal's Book of Lists in 2005. Sewell's family has been involved with Golden Corral since his father became a founding investor when the business first began. A graduate of Campbell University, Sewell worked as a manager trainee and rose through the management ranks. By 1996, he owned two Golden Corral restaurants, one in Burlington, N.C. and the other in Hickory, N.C. At that time, annual sales were \$5 million, Platinum Corral is now at \$70 million per year. Golden Corral restaurants, located nationwide, feature steaks, buffet, and bakery at every location, each offering the highest quality food at reasonable prices in a clean, friendly atmosphere, thereby fulfilling their mission to "make pleasurable dining affordable."

About GC Partners, Inc.:

GC Partners, Inc., based in Winston-Salem, owns and operates Golden Corral franchises in North Carolina, South Carolina and Florida, with 2007 sales of \$40 million and nearly \$45 million in assets. With approximately 1,000 employees, GC Partners was ranked 3rd by the Triangle Business Journal's Fast 50 in 2004. For more information call (336) 767-1600.

Keywords:

Platinum Corral, Billy Sewell, GC Partners, Inc., David E. Gronewoller, Golden Corral, North Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association, board of Directors, North Carolina dining, franchise, Golden Corral, Restaurateur of the Year, hospitality industry, North Carolina restaurants

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